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DEPARTMENT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, AF/SE NATSIOS AND AF/SPG
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND SHORTLEY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/21/2016

TAGS: PREL PGOV KPKO AU SU UN

SUBJECT: DENG ALOR: BASHIR BACKING DOWN IN OPPOSITION TO UN

Classified By: P/E Chief E. Whitaker, Reason: Sections 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) In a November 21 conversation with AID Mission Director and Poloff, Minister of Cabinet Affairs Deng Alor said that President Bashir had begun to "back down" in his opposition to United Nations (UN) intervention in Darfur. He based this assessment on a cabinet briefing that Bashir had given on the Addis Ababa agreement of November 16. Alor said that the Sudanese government's continued opposition to UN intervention hinged on the number of troops that the African Union (AU) could raise from African countries. He suggested that if between 10,000 and 15,000 troops could be raised from Africa, President Bashir could continue to say that UN forces were unnecessary. However, Alor said that if the requisite numbers of African forces could not be deployed, Sudanese acceptance of UN troops would be inevitable. He expected clarity on the government's stance toward the Addis Ababa agreement following the November 29 meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council. (Comment: Due to logistical constraints, it is unlikely that the AU can raise and support an additional force of 10,000 troops, and Islamic countries such as Egypt and Algeria--which Sudan has suggested as potential troop contributors--are unlikely to deploy their forces without UN administration. End comment.

¶2. (C) Alor said that President Bashir and others within the National Congress Party (NCP) were concerned about the Democratic victory in the U.S. Congress and anticipated that the USG would take a more hard-line approach to Sudan. He indicated that this fear of more strident U.S. policy toward Sudan has led to a greater Sudanese willingness to compromise before the new Congressional session begins in January.

HUME